

Waitaki Boys High School: Hall of Memories, Oamaru



WAITAKI BOYS HIGH SCHOOL – HALL OF MEMORIES, OAMARU (C. T. TEMPLETON 2016)

The idea for the Hall of Memories was supported unanimously at the Easter Reunion of the Waitaki Old Boys Association in 1920 and the foundation stone laid on 1 November 1923 by the Governor-General, Lord Jellicoe.¹ The Perpendicular Gothic / Tudor style building was designed by the Oamaru architect J.M. Forrester and finally cost £13,000. Work on the Hall was suspended for a considerable while owing to a lack of high quality stone, and the building completed in time for the Hall of Memories to be opened by the Duke of York on 16 March 1927. The roof is blue slate and the hammer beam ceiling of Oregon. The platform furniture is teak, most of it from the battlecruiser *HMS New Zealand*,² and two chairs and the candlesticks made from timber from the *HMS Powerful*.³

In 1931, the pipe organ was installed in the Hall. Built by Lawton & Osborne, to the design of the Christchurch Anglican Cathedral organist Dr Bradshaw, it was built at a cost of £2,188 — excluding casework, which brought the total price to £2,770. Dr Bradshaw opened the organ on 8 December 1931.³ The organ is built with the Swell and Pedal divisions on the south side of the stage, and the enclosed and unenclosed Great on the north side. The action was originally tubular-pneumatic, however in 1967 a contract to electrify the action was let to A. E. Hayman of Dunedin (ex HN&B), and was sublet to the Church Organ Company of Auckland. In a fortnight the organ was cleaned, fitted with electro-pneumatic action, new keys and pistons, new Great octave coupler and tabs replacing the drawstops.⁴

In 1996 the organ was restored by the South Island Organ Company Ltd, including reinstating drawstop units at the console. It involved removing the instrument and upgrading the transmission with a Muldersoft system. One part of the work involved running new wiring to both organ chambers, and when working under the stage, climbing up the wall cavity at the Great side was a handy short cut, rather than crawling all the way out from under the stage. The organ was reopened on 13 June 1997.



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GREAT (unenclosed)			COUPLERS	
Lge. Open Diapason	8		Swell Octave	
Sml. Open Diapason	8		Swell Unison Off	
Principal	4		Swell Sub Octave	
GREAT (enclosed)			Swell to Great	
Hohl Flute	8		Swell Octave to Great	
Dulciana	8		Swell Sub Octave to Great	
Harmonic Flute	4		Great Octave	
Piccolo	2		Swell to Pedal	
Clarinet	8		Swell Octave to Pedal	
			Great to Pedal	
			Great Octave to Pedal	
SWELL				
Lieblich Bourdon	16	A	Six thumb pistons to Swell	
Diaphonic Diapason	8		Six thumb pistons to Great	
Cor De Nuit	8		Six general thumb pistons	
Viol D'Orchestre	8		Six general toe pistons	
Voix Celeste	8		Two reversible thumb and toe pistons –	
Gemshorn	4		Great to Pedal	
Lieblich Flute	4		Swell to Great	
Fifteenth	2		Five toe pistons to Pedal	
Mixture	II		Great and Pedal piston coupler drawstop	
Trumpet	8		Generals on Swell toe pistons drawstop	
Oboe	8		General cancel	
Tremulant			500 channel sequencer	
			Next, Last, Restore sequencer thumb	
			pistons	
PEDAL				
Open Diapason	16	B		
Bourdon	16	C		
Echo Bourdon	16	A		
Octave	8	B		
Bass Flute	8	C		
			Compass 61/30	
			Action: Electro-pneumatic	



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- 1 McDonald, K. C., *History of Waitaki Boys' High School 1883–1933* (Auckland: Whitcombe & Tombs, 1934) p.265
- 2 *HMS New Zealand* was a gift to Britain paid for by the New Zealand Government taking out a loan in 1910 of £2,000,000 and the ship launched on 1 July 1911. The ship was sold for scrap on 19 December 1922, but the loan not paid off until 1944. During patrols just before the Battle of Jutland (1 June 1916) *HMS Australia* collided with *HMS New Zealand* twice in three minutes during manoeuvres - resulting in *Australia* being put out of action for several months.
- 3 McDonald, K. C., op.cit., pp.337-338
- 4 McWhannell, T.R., 'The Organ, Waitaki Boys' High School', *Organ News*, vol. 5, no. 4 (August 1969), p.11